United Nations A/70/788–S/2016/257

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
17 March 2016

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda items 44 and 79 (a)

Question of Cyprus

Oceans and the law of the sea

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 17 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter of the Greek Cypriot representative dated 29 February 2016 (A/70/767-S/2016/201), I would like to bring to your attention the following considerations.

Firstly, I would like to reiterate that there is no single authority which in law or in fact is competent to represent jointly the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots, consequently Cyprus as a whole.

Having said that, the outer limits of Turkey's continental shelf in the maritime areas in the eastern Mediterranean that are west of longitude 32°16'18" were defined in the Turkish notes verbales dated 2 March 2004 and 12 March 2013.

The areas claimed by the Greek Cypriots in the referenced letter, in the west of the above-mentioned outer limits, fall entirely within Turkey's continental shelf, where Turkey has ipso facto and ab initio rights, as well as legitimate interests.

Thus, in accordance with well-established rules and principles of international law, it goes without saying that the Turkish naval vessels in the area have the legitimate right to intervene with any scientific research activity conducted without Turkey's consent/permission.

In this specific case, the vessel MV *Flying Enterprise*, upon entering the Turkish continental shelf on 17 December 2015, was hailed by the Turkish frigate TCG *Gediz* and was informed that she should not continue her activities on the Turkish continental shelf without prior coordination and/or permission from the relevant Turkish authorities. In other words, the Turkish naval vessel acted with due regard to well-established international practices and thus no "harassment" took place as alleged in the letter of the Greek Cypriot representative.

Subsequently, when the Turkish authorities were duly notified of the nature and purpose of the said activity (survey for the purpose of cable laying), MV *Flying Enterprise* resumed her operations within the Turkish continental shelf.

Please recycle

In the light of the foregoing, Turkey refutes all the allegations contained in the letter of the Greek Cypriot representative.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 44 and 79 (a), and of the Security Council, and published in the next *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit **Çevik**
Permanent Representative